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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **2010 NECAP Results: High-School Students Making Progress Rhode Island on Track Toward Most Performance Measures**

Results of the fall 2010 New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) assessments released today (February 9) show that high-school scores improved significantly in mathematics (33% proficient, up 6 points) and in reading (76% proficient, up 3 points).

Scores in grades 3 through 8 improved slightly but not significantly statewide.

The 2010 high-school four-year graduation rate was up one point, to 76%. The five-year graduation rate was up two points, to 79%.

The results released today show that Rhode Island met or nearly met 22 of the 31 statewide performance measures for assessments, achievement gaps, and graduation rates. The performance measures are part of the Rhode Island Race to the Top grant.

“I am gratified at the positive progress reflected in these scores,” Governor Chafee said. “At the same time, though, I am acutely aware of the need for continued efforts to improve our education system – particularly through reinvesting in our public schools. A great deal of work remains to be done, and I look forward to leading a meaningful dialogue on the most appropriate and effective strategy for making our public schools the finest in the nation and the foundation for our state’s job creation and economic growth.”

“The significant one-year improvement in our high-school results shows that we are on the right track with our agenda for transforming education in Rhode Island,” said Robert G. Flanders, Jr., Esq., Chairman of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education. “We still remain concerned about the low scores in mathematics across the state, though we have made progress over the past three years, particularly at the high-school level.”

“Today’s results show some positive achievements statewide as well as pockets of excellence in several schools and districts,” said Patrick A. Guida, vice-chairman of the Board of Regents. “I want to congratulate Rhode Island students and educators on these accomplishments. By working together as a team to align curriculum, instruction, and standards and to implement our strategic plan, we will continue to see improvements in student achievement.”

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“I am very pleased with the significant improvements in our high-school scores, and we now need to see this kind of progress at every grade level,” said Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “I am confident that, as we work hard to ensure that we have excellent teachers and leaders in every school and that students have the resources and support they need, we will see continued progress and we will continue to close achievement gaps.”

Rhode Island scores have improved in all assessments at all school levels since the first year of NECAP assessments (2005 for grades 3-8, 2007 for grade 11). Elementary-school scores (percent proficient) have improved by 11 points in reading, 9 points in mathematics; middle-school scores have improved by 13 points in reading, 9 points in mathematics; high-school scores have improved by 14 points in reading, 11 points in mathematics.

The Governor and Commissioner released the 2010 NECAP results at the Globe Park School, in Woonsocket, which improved by 8 points in reading and 4 points in mathematics.

The NECAP assessments were administered jointly in October 2010 to students in grades 3-8 in mathematics and reading (and in grades 5 and 8 in writing) in Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. At the high-school level (grade 11), Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Vermont students were tested in reading, mathematics, and writing. NECAP is the only multistate testing program in the nation.

In reading, 71% of Rhode Island elementary-school students are proficient and 70% of middle-school students are proficient (both up 1 point from 2009). In mathematics, 61% of Rhode Island elementary-school students are proficient (unchanged) and 57% of Rhode Island middle-school students are proficient (up 1 point). In writing, 57% of Rhode Island students (grades 5, 8, and 11) are proficient. (Only grade 11 was tested last year.)

In the high-school (grade-11) mathematics assessment, 38% of students were substantially below proficient, which would put them below the minimum standard for graduation. The percent of students scoring substantially below proficient has improved by 13 points from the first assessment (2007) and improved by 7 points from the 2009 assessment.

Many Rhode Island student groups showed progress in mathematics, including Black students (up 2 points, all grades combined), Hispanic students (up 4 points), and economically disadvantaged students (up 2 points), although achievement gaps of more than 15 points separate these groups from the statewide average scores.

Compared with the other NECAP states, Rhode Island reading scores were the same as Maine but 7 points below New Hampshire in grades 3-8; 2 points better than New Hampshire in grade 11. Rhode Island writing scores were the same as New Hampshire and 12 points better than Maine in grades 3-8; 6 points better than New Hampshire in grade 11. Rhode Island mathematics scores were below New Hampshire and Maine. (Maine does use NECAP for grade 11; Vermont releases its results today.)

At the district level, two districts – Exeter-West Greenwich and Providence – made statistically significant gains this year in mathematics; only West Warwick made significant gains in reading.

At the school level, only three schools made statistically significant gains in both mathematics and reading: **Coventry High School, East Providence High School and Pilgrim High School, in Warwick.**

A full report on the October 2010 assessment results and the 2010 graduation rates is posted on the RIDE Web site, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/Results.aspx>

NECAP statewide, district, and school reports are posted at:

<http://reporting.measuredprogress.org/NECAPpublicRI/>